2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

group there are many other groups, each with its own historical background, subtly linked up though it be with the royal background; secondly, great as the glory of the queens is, we must not fail to see their people in their true perspective against the masses of foreign tribes and against the stature of the European Colossus; and, thirdly, however greatly men rely for their sense of security upon ultimate values, their lives are immediately and predominantly concerned with very simple matters, with tilling the soil and caring for their cattle, with getting and preparing food, with securing shelter and warmth, with gossip at beer drinks and with petty domestic squabbles. [73]

The Lovedu to-day are predominant in an area of some 5,000 square miles, the area of the Lovedu lowveld which is bounded by the Game Reserve, the escarpment, the Klein Letaba and the Olifants Rivers. On all sides of this area there are mightier peoples. Shangana-Tongs to the east. Pedi to the south, Venda to the north and several highveld tribes to the west—all these overshadow the people of Mujaji in numbers, in organization, and in power. But within the Lovedu lowveld, if we count all branches of the Lovedu, the subjects under them (about 50,000) outnumber the rest of the Sotho-speaking tribes put together (some 40,000). There are in addition many people (perhaps 25,000) under Shangana-Tonga chiefs, and in the eyes of the European one of them has far greater stature than Mujaji. [3] [4]

The Lovedu live in a location marked out in the early 1890's, immediately after the advent of European settlers and the conflicts that resulted. The original location, just short of seventy square miles, was enlarged during the 1930's by the purchase of tribal farms, and now the whole reserve is about 150 square miles in extent. This falls far short of the 600 square miles within which Mujaji used to exercise effective jurisdiction. She held the area between the Moketsi, the Great Letaba and the Molodzi Rivers, from where the latter joins the Great Letaba at its northernmost bend, and from there westwards to the Moketsi; beyond it for another 400 square miles, but rather indefinitely towards the north, north-east, and east, where the population was sparse, Mujaji's writ ran, through uncertainly and spasmodically. [3]

The population of the reserve we estimate at 33,000, which is considerably in excess of the official census figure for 1936.[1] The average [4]

[1] Official census figures for 1936 are available, not for the Lovedu reserve, but only for two separate units of areas: (a) the Lovedu location and (b) an area to the north of it, about half of which falls within the Lovedu reserve. For (a) the figures are 11,636 and for (b) 7,205. If we assume that half of the population of (b) falls within the Lovedu reserve, its total population would be 15,238, or only about 46 per cent of our estimate of 33,000. We arrive at our figure from three sources: (1) Kraal-to-kraal countings in three sample districts with a total area of 14·5 square miles and a total population of 3,500. These districts represent different localities, some valley, some hill, and constitute a fair sample. On the basis of the average density of population in them, the total figure for the Lovedu reserve of 150 square miles should be 150 ÷ 14·5 × 3,500, or 36,207. (2) The proportion of people who, according to Native accounts, our own impressions, and independent European eye-witnesses, escaped official enumeration. Despite instructions that the people of each district should collect in their respective districts, the enumerators, finding the districts inaccessible by road

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

density, though as high as 220 to the square mile, cannot be an overestimate; it is below the average of the sample areas and much below the 450 found in one of them, which is by no means the densest in the reserve.

The geographical features vary from mountains to flat country. The rainfall, which coincides with the hot months, October to March, is very good on the hills. In the flat country to the north it is rather uncertain. The mountains have many springs, but neither of the two main rivers is navigable and there is little life in them. The people do not eat fish and have no river craft, though they speak of a bark canoe (*legugwe*) used in the old days. On the slopes of the hills there are forests and one is of magnificent cycads (Mujaji palms). The people have an intimate knowledge of the names, the qualities, and the uses of the flora. Their dependence upon trees, shrubs, and grasses for food, economic purposes, and medicine is one of the most impressive aspects of their culture. The soil is a reddish, fairly fertile loam. At present there is hardly any game; but in any case the Lovedu were never great hunters, and knowledge of the fauna is now of small use. The temperature is never excessive; the summer rains cool the hot air and the cold winds are easily subdued by bright sunshine. Summer merges into winter and winter overlaps summer; there is no well-marked spring or autumn. The people are agriculturists rather than pastoralists; the few cattle they have and the more numerous goats are not considered so much as food but rather as pivots of social relationship.

The people of the royal group, the nucleus of the tribe, live mostly on the mountains; the valleys and flats are occupied by Shangana-Tonga, recent-comers who are despised by the Sotho, and by the Roka, residents of the flats, looked upon as somewhat inferior though of diverse Sotho ancestry. The nuclear group or Lovedu proper are not numerous. Their group name, *Amovo*, is what we may call the surname of one in every ten people in the reserve. Other *Amovo*, 'brothers' of the Lovedu, rule such tribes as those of Sekhupo, Mamaila and Rakwadu, but many are scattered among dozens of alien tribes. In the whole Lovedu lowveld the *Amovo* are much less than 10 per cent. of the population.

The non-nuclear groups in the reserve are accretions from outside (if we except the Khigxo, the Dgxoa and some Lions and Elephants who either were in the country or came with the Lovedu). They have been

and the country mountainous, stationed themselves in a body at a single spot in the valley to which the people were then called. The new arrangements caused confusion and many of those who had collected in their districts dispersed to their homes and never presented themselves for enumeration. In addition, large numbers, as is their habit in the face of European intervention, secreted themselves in the bush. European eye-witnesses estimate that only 33 to 40 per cent, say 36·3 per cent, were actually enumerated, but Natives place the figure as high as 50 per cent. Taking the average of 43·15 per cent, we arrive at a total population for the reserve of 15,238 × 100 ÷ 43·15, or 35,322. (3) The number of taxpayers in the Lovedu location, which is about 4,000. On the accepted basis of calculation, the location population would be 4,000 × 5, or 20,000—that is 1·72 times that of the census figure of 11,636, and the total for the reserve may be calculated as 15,238 × 1·72 or 26,209. Finally, averaging the three figures, 36,207, 35,322 and 26,209, we get 32,579 or, to the nearest thousand, 33,000, which is the figure we adopt.

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

More thorough ploughing and a revival of the interest men used to have in agriculture would make the balance swing evenly. A man should not feel, as he tends to do to-day, that he pulls his full weight if he goes out periodically to earn wages, ploughs the fields, discusses cases, and builds huts. He has plenty of time to take a larger part in agriculture, as he did in the old days and as many of the older men still do.

Ploughing has brought about many other changes. It has necessitated clearing of the stumps and stones, and broken down to a large extent the old contour-terracing. This has accelerated erosion, which was in any case inevitable owing to the overstocking, just as overstocking is inevitable, not because men keep many cattle, but because of the density of the population. Erosion impoverishes the soil and over-use exhausts it. The result is that the initial benefits of the plough, which made larger gardens and better cultivation possible, are gradually being turned into liabilities. Every one will tell you that crops are more abundant to-day than in the old days; but the price is already heavy, and as the quality of the soil gets worse it will be increasingly heavier. Variety, the single-crop field, rotation of crops have gone. The planting season is much later and less concentrated in the months of October to December than in the old days, for ploughing is a rapid process as compared with hoeing, and one can avail oneself of good rains even as late as the middle of February. Late ploughing is not always deliberate; the small number of available ploughs and, more serious, the inadequacy of the draught animals, are equally responsible. The distribution of these resources is effected by various forms of co-operation, mostly partnerships in which one supplies labour, another the plough, and still another the cattle or donkeys. These partnerships, though patterned upon old forms of co-operation, have to take account of new factors, economic rather than social, and lead to new elements in the society. Overstocking and ploughing have contributed to the silting up with useless sand of the old riverside gardens. Their original purpose, which was to tide men over the scarcity in the months November to February, partly fell away when ploughing brought a measure of abundance, but now that the old needs are reasserting themselves these gardens are destroyed. In their place the new Europeanized gardens, irrigated by furrows along the upper stretches of the smaller streams, have arisen, but the incentives that stimulate this new experiment are somewhat different: the gardens are for profit, not for providing an advance crop. The effects of ploughing may be pursued in many directions: it has emphasized the economic as against the purely social value of cattle, at the same time eliminating milk from the diet of adults; it has to some extent militated against husbanding the food resources; it has stimulated excessive drinking of beer; and it has released a large amount of energy for which there is little creative outlet.

For the present, agriculture is in unstable equilibrium. Every adult still has his own field, but the extreme limit of land available for cultivation has been reached. Limitation of stock can no longer ease the situation, as the chief evil is not overstocking but over-population. About 80 per cent. of the entire soil is arable land, at present or in the near past put under cultivation; as much as 80 per cent. of this land is

2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14

571 622 619 distinguished, but more often, especially among the common people, they are identified or hopelessly confused. But if to swear by one's totem means something in some cases and among some groups, it usually signifies as little as when we swear by Jupiter.

571 49 Before embarking upon a further elucidation of these names, let us look more closely at an area in Uulovedu so as to obtain a better idea of the distribution and nature of these constituent groups. We select an area towards the south-west, of about four square miles, because if we go to the centre we shall obtain an exaggerated impression of the proportion of *khovo*, the royal group, whereas in the extreme north we may well think that we are in a tribe of Shangana-Tonga.

[161] In this area, which has a population of about 830 people, there are, counting the group names of both men and women, Elephants, Cattle, Crocodiles, Leopards, Porcupines, Goats, Lions, Pigs, Duikers, Impala, Wild Dogs, Khalaga and Sia without totem, besides a fair sprinkling of Shangana-Tonga and even people using the name Zimbabwe. There are two individuals calling themselves Oorlams, one Bush and one Kaps (Cape coloured), which is most unusual and does not reflect the position in the tribe as a whole. There are, finally, some whom we must merely designate Venda because, as they say, they swear by no animal or object and they do not know to what Venda group they belong. That is not the end of the matter, for in the Elephants (*ɸou*) cluster there are fifteen different groups. Some of them may be remotely related, but they distinguish themselves by different secondary names and know of no common ancestry or of any links in the past; indeed, as they come from very different parts, they positively deny a common origin. For instance, there are *ɸou* of Khalaga, recent-comers from Rhodesia, *ɸou* of Tsubye, far away to the south-east near Phalaborwa, *ɸou* of Thovolo in the Game Reserve to the north-east, *ɸou* of Ravothata, the messengers, it is said, of the royal group when they migrated from Rhodesia, *ɸou* of Sefareni, whose nearest relatives are in Nareni (Mahlo) country. Similarly, there are ten different groups of Lions: some, like the Khinga, were the aboriginal inhabitants, who are said to have known no fire and no political organization, and were ousted by the Lovedu; others, like those of Selowa, come from the far east with the cult of the possessed, which they might have adopted from the Ndau in Portuguese Moçambique, and still others hail from Vendaland and Duiwkwa. There are likewise clusters of Crocodiles with four, of Duikers with four, of Pigs, Khalaga, Sia, Impala and Wild Dogs, each with two different secondary designations (division or group names). Among the Shangana-Tonga, though they are comparatively few in number, there are no less than four different totems and nine different other names (*shilonga*), such as Loyi, Khosa, Mavunda, Mathie and Ngoveni. Reckoning all the differently named groups as distinct, we have over sixty such groups in this area alone.

The following table gives a rough representation of the position in the area in question:

3: Krige E-5 (1928-1938)1938 FX14 Lovedu FX14
Thonga FT6

of the white man, some of their headmen were granted independent locations which have served as nuclei for the building up of more united tribal groups. (See accompanying map.)

The most important Sotho tribes of this area are the Lobedu, the Narene and the Khaha who together comprise about three-quarters of the total Sotho population.[1] The outstanding demographical feature is, however, the numerical predominance of the Lobedu who, with a population of well over 40,000, are not only the greatest tribe, but outnumber all the other Sotho-speaking tribes put together.[2] The pre-eminence and cultural influence of the Lobedu in this area does not rest solely upon their numerical preponderance. It is based largely upon the fame of their queen, Modjadji, who, as the greatest rain-maker in the Northern Transvaal, is not only regularly approached with gifts by other chiefs but also sometimes places them on the throne (*ho bea bakeni*) and is appealed to in cases of disputed succession.

This area, though forming part of a greater cultural whole including the Northern Transvaal Highveld and probably Pediland to the south, is, however, sharply characterised by distinctive features, such as ritual suicide of the chief and recognition of women as rulers in their own right, that are not found elsewhere. These are sufficient to form a fairly well-defined culture pattern, which, owing to the overwhelming numerical preponderance of the Lobedu, if for no other reason,

[1] The Sotho population of our area is made up as follows, according to van Warmelo:

Lobedu	8137	taxpayers.	
Narene	5181	"	(Makhio 1332, Letswalo 1185).
Khaha	1608	"	
Thabine (Monsiboya)	1088	"	
Phalaborwa	332	"	
Makwebe	300	"	
Bale Mamidje	413	"	
Shai or Tsolyo	256	"	
Tswale	317	"	Sotho-speaking Venda.
Modo	260	"	

The only large tribal groups among Shangana-Tonga are

Mohlaba	2918	taxpayers.
Nwamirwa	1347	"

[2] The proportion is Lobedu 8137 taxpayers.

[illegible] 7333 "